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FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2913  
INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 001228

SIPDIS

AIDAC  
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STATE FOR AF/SPG, PRM, AND ALSO PASS USAID/W  
USAID FOR DCHA SUDAN TEAM, AF/EA, DCHA  
NAIROBI FOR USAID/DCHA/OFDA, USAID/REDSO, AND FAS  
USMISSION UN ROME  
GENEVA FOR NKYLOH  
NAIROBI FOR SFO  
NSC FOR JMELINE, TSHORTLEY  
USUN FOR TMALY  
BRUSSELS FOR PLERNER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [PREF](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [SOCI](#) [KAWC](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: Sudan - Avian Flu Sitrep No. 6, May 24, 2006

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Summary  
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¶1. On May 21, 2006, the U. N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) office in Khartoum convened the second Technical Task Force meeting on avian influenza (AI) in Sudan. Though the Government of National Unity (GNU) has acknowledged the presence of the highly pathogenic H5N1 strain of AI in Sudan, this information has not yet been officially released to the public. Few AI outbreaks have been reported during the last two weeks. Khartoum based offices of FAO, the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the U.N. World Health Organization (WHO) will present a joint proposal on actions needed to mitigate and contain the AI outbreak in Sudan to the international donor community on May 28. End Summary.

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Recent Developments  
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¶2. On May 21, 2006, FAO/Khartoum convened the second meeting for the Sudan Technical Task Force on Avian Influenza. This task force is composed of 11 member organizations representing various U.N. agencies, Sudanese government ministries, Sudan's poultry industry, and the international donor community: FAO, WHO, UNICEF, Ministry of Animal Resources (MoAR), Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST), Ministry of Finance (MoF), Sudan's Chamber of Commercial Poultry Producers (CCPP), the World Bank, the Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission (ECHO), and USAID. Just five of the eleven member organizations attended the meeting. Representatives from WHO, UNICEF, MoAR, MoH, MoF, and PPCC were notably absent. FAO was assigned to contact these organizations, particularly the government ministries, to ensure their attendance at the next meeting. Members present at the meeting approved terms of reference for the task force, which had been presented at the group's first meeting the week prior. As most of Sudan's poultry industry is located in Khartoum, the task force agreed to invite a representative from Khartoum State government to join the task force.

¶3. Though Sudan's GNU has privately acknowledged the presence of the highly pathogenic H5N1 strain of AI in Sudan, this information has not been released to the general

public. According to FAO's consultant, few AI outbreaks have been reported in Khartoum and Gezira States since May 7. The consultant hypothesized that the marked drop in the number of AI cases reported in recent weeks might be a result of prevailing high daytime temperatures averaging 105 to 113 degrees Fahrenheit. However, the mode of AI transmission in Sudan has not been definitively determined and outbreaks at poultry farms south of Khartoum could occur anytime.

¶4. Active disease surveillance is necessary to ensure early detection of additional outbreaks. FAO's Nairobi-based East Africa Regional Advisor for Coordination of Technical Cooperation recently spent one week in Sudan kick-starting the AI outbreak response implementation process. Khartoum State has trained youth health educators in seven localities to raise community awareness of AI prevention and control measures. While local culling operations continue, workers have not been provided with recommended personal protective equipment (PPE) and no disease surveillance mechanisms for workers is currently in place. Furthermore, the government's failure to address the compensation issue is likely providing a disincentive for farm owners to report additional disease outbreaks.

¶5. USAID consultant Gavin Macgregor-Skinner briefed Allan Reed, Director of USAID South Sudan Programs, on the AI situation in Sudan and has proceeded to Nairobi for further meetings. USAID plans to hire an additional Khartoum-based AI consultant as soon as possible. Post takes this opportunity to thank AID/W for Macgregor-Skinner's timely and excellent contributions in supporting preparedness and response to AI in Sudan.

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Next Steps  
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¶6. FAO, UNICEF, and WHO will present a joint proposal on actions needed to mitigate and contain the AI outbreak in Sudan to the international donor community on May 28.

¶7. The final USAID shipment of 2,000 sets of PPE is expected to arrive in Khartoum (1,500) and Juba (500) in the near future.

HUME